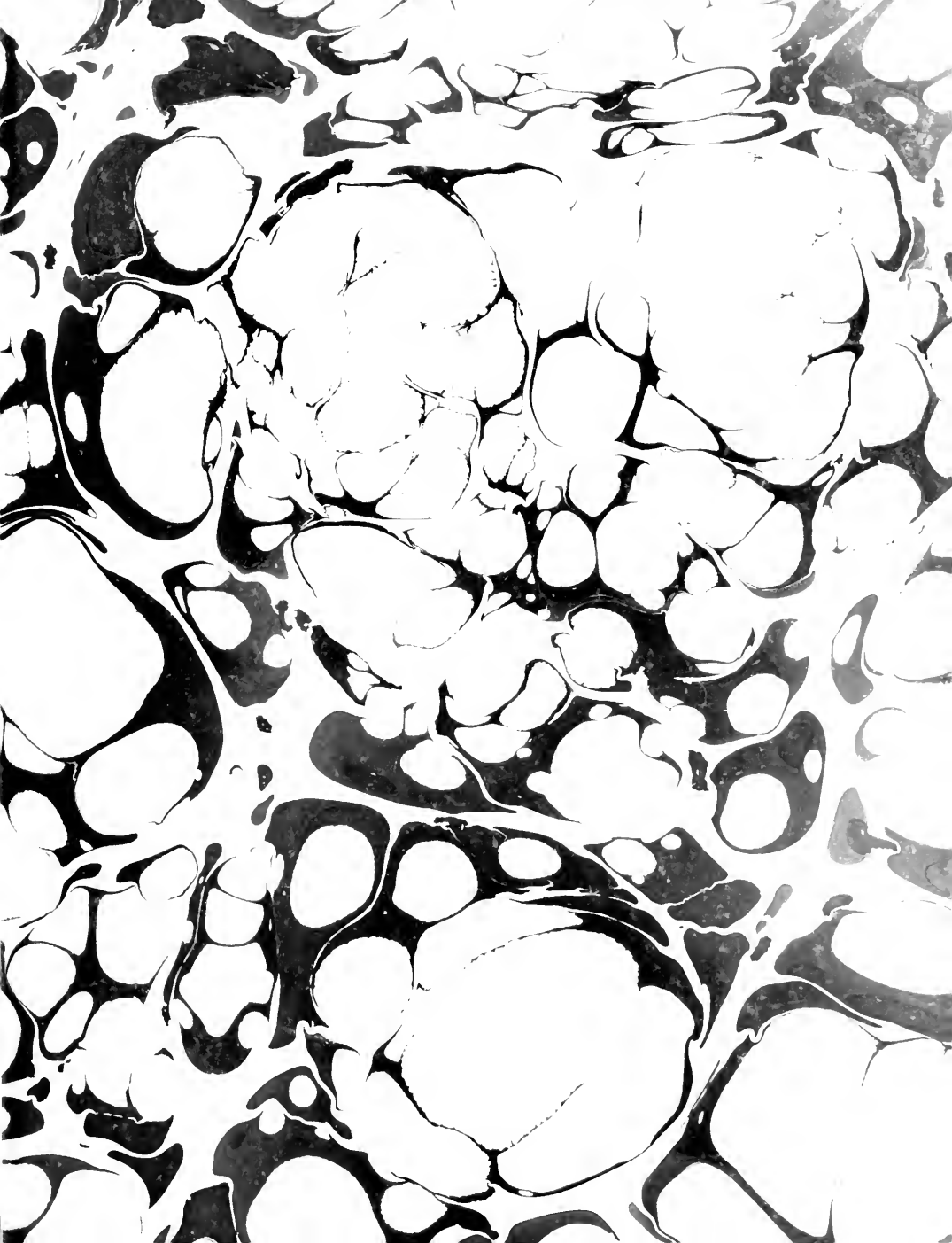

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The Danger of Mercenary Parliaments.

1. SEveral Treatiſes have been formerly written, and more (I doubt not) will be in this juncture publiſh'd, with Directions and Informations to the People of *England* for chooſing fit and proper Repreſentatives for the enſuing Parliament, wherein ſufficient notice will be taken of the Failures and Defects of ſeveral who have already been entruſted in that Service, and the due Qualifications of ſuch who are now to be elected. I ſhall therefore confine my preſent thoughts only to one particular Head, which yet, in my opinion, ſeems to involve in it the inevitable Fate of *England*, which wholly depends upon the choice of Members for the next Seſſion of Parliament: I mean *the chooſing or refuſing of ſuch Perſons who are now poſſeſt of any Places and Preferments, depending upon the gift and pleaſure of the Court.* If herein my Endeavours prove unſucceſsful, I ſhall have nothing left but the ſatisfaction of my own Conſcience to ſupport me under the deplorable Conſequents and Effects which muſt neceſſarily attend the choice of a Houſe of Commons fill'd with Officers and Court-Penſioners. This is the laſt ſtruggle and effort the People of *England* have left them for their Properties; and ſhould we now miſcarry in this, we may ſit down and idly ſhew our Affections for our Country, and fruitleſly bewail the loſs of our Liberties, but ſhall never meet with another opportunity of exerting our ſelves in its Service. That I may therefore ſet the Minds of People right in this Particular ere it be too late, I think it will be only neceſſary to ſhew the danger of chooſing Members that are in Places from two Conſiderations: Firſt, From the nature of ſuch a Parliament conſider'd in it ſelf: And, ſecondly, From what has already been done by Parliaments ſo qualified. In both which I ſhall be very brief, and content my ſelf with much fewer Arguments than might be urg'd upon this Subject: For I ſhould almoſt deſpair of being ſurviv'd by the Liberties of *England*, if I could imagine there was a neceſſity of ſaying much in a caſe not only of ſuch irreſiſtible Evidence and Demonſtration, but alſo of the utmoſt concern and importance to us.

2. Firſt then, We ſhall beſt be able to underſtand the nature of ſuch an ill-choſen Parliament, by comparing it with a true one, and with the original deſign of Parliaments in their Inſtitution. I hope it need not be told that they were at firſt intended for a Support to the King's juſt Prerogative, and a Protection to the Subjects in their as juſt Rights and Privileges: For maintaining all due Honour to the Executive Power, and all ſuitable reſpect and encouragement to thoſe who are intruſted with the Adminiſtration of the Laws: For a poiſe and balance between the two extreme contending Powers of abſolute Monarchy and Anarchy: For a check and curb to inſolent and licentious Miniſters, and a terror to ambitious and over-grown Stateſmen: For giving their Advice to his Majeſty in all matters of Importance: For making neceſſary Laws to preſerve or improve our Conſtitution, and abrogating ſuch as were found burdenſom and obſolete: For giving the King Mony for defraying the Charges and Expences of the Government, or maintaining a neceſſary War againſt Foreign and Domeſtick Enemies: For examining and inſpecting the Public Accounts, to know if their Mony be applied to its true uſe and purpoſes: In ſhort, For the beſt Security imaginable to his Majeſty's Honour and Royal Dignities, and the Subjects Liberties, Eſtates, and Lives.

3. This being the nature and true deſign of a Parliament, let us now ſee whether a Houſe of Commons, full of Officers and Court-Penſioners, will anſwer thoſe noble and laudable Ends of their Conſtitution:

And here indeed I begin already to be asham'd of my undertaking; the proof of the Negative is so ridiculous, that it looks too much like a Jest to ask any one in his Wits, Whether a Parliament fill'd with Delinquents will ever call themselves to an account, or what account would be given if they should? Whether an Assembly of public Robbers will sentence one another to be punish'd, or to make Restitution? Whether it is possible our Grievances can be redress't, that are committed by Persons from whom there is no higher Power to appeal? Whether there is any hope of Justice where the Malefactors are the Judges? Whether his Majesty can be rightly inform'd in Affairs relating to Himself or the Public, when they are represented to him only by such Persons who design to abuse him? Whether the Public Accounts will be faithfully inspected by those who embezzle our Mony to their own use? Whether the King's Prerogative can be lawfully maintain'd by such who only pervert it to their own sinister ends and purposes? Whether a Parliament can be a true balance, where all the weight lies only in one Scale? Or, lastly, Whether a House of Commons can vote freely, who are either prepossest with the hopes and promises of enjoying Places, or the slavish fears of losing them? Methinks it is offering too much Violence to human Nature to ask such Questions as these; I shall therefore leave this invidious Point.

4. Yet lest still any should remain unsatisfied, or lull'd into a fond opinion, that these Mischiefs will not ensue upon the Elections they shall make, I shall further endeavour to convince those who are most mov'd by the force of Examples, by coming to my second Particular, and shewing how Parliaments so qualify'd have all along behav'd themselves. And here I must confess there are not many Instances to be given, the Project of corrupting Parliaments being but of a late date, a Practice first set on foot within the compass of our own Memories, as the last and most dangerous Stratagem that ever was invented by an encroaching Tyrant to possess himself of the Rights of a freeborn People; I mean K. *CHARLES* the 2d. who, well remembring with how little success both He and his Father had made use of open Arms and downright Violence to storm and batter down the Bulwarks of our excellent Constitution, had recourse at last to those mean Arts, and underhand Practices, of bribing and corrupting with Mony those who were intrusted with the Conservation of our Laws, and the Guardianship of our Liberties. And herein he so well succeeded, that the Mischiefs and Calamities, occasion'd by that mercenary Parliament, did not terminate with his Life and Reign; but the Effects of them are handed and continued down, and very sensibly felt by the Nation to this very hour. For it is to that House of Commons the formidable Greatness of *France* was owing, and to their account therefore ought we to set down the prodigious Expences of the late War: It was by those infamous Members that Mony was given to make a feign'd and collusive War with *France*, which at the same time was employ'd either in subduing the Subjects at home, or oppressing our Protestant Neighbours abroad: It was this Venal Parliament in effect that furnish'd the King of *France* with Timber and skilful Workmen for building Ships, as well as expert Mariners, and a prodigious quantity of Brass and Iron Canon, Morter-pieces, and Bullets from the Tower; by the help of which our own treacherous King was able to boast publickly, and thank God, that he had at last made his Brother of *France* a Seaman: By this means the Honour of *England* was prostituted, and our Natural and Naval Strength betray'd, with which, like *SAMPSON*, we should easily have broken all the Cords that *Europe*, or the whole World could have made to bind and enslave us, had not this Parliament made a Sacrifice of all to the Charms of a *French DALILAH*. To this profligate and villanous Reign we are to ascribe the loss of all the considerable Charters of *England*; the deaths of our best Patriots, the encouragement and almost establishment of *Popery*, the decay of Trade, the growth of Arbitrary Power, the ill effects of dishonourable Leagues, the shutting up of the Exchequer, the progress of all sorts of Debauchery,

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the ſervile compliances at Court of a rampant *Hierarchy* in the Kingdom, the inſolent Deportment of the inferior *Clergy* both in the Univerſities and elſewhere, their ſlaviſh Doctrine of Paſſive Obedience and Nonreſiſtance; in ſhort, a general depravation of Manners, and almoſt utter extirpation of Virtue and moral Honeſty. Theſe and all the other Miſchiefs of that Reign are juſtly chargeable to the account of that penſion'd Parliament, who either were the immediate Authors, or the undoubted cauſers of them: who, tho they ſat long and often, and could not be ignorant of our deplorable Condition, yet having their Eyes blinded with the duſt of Gold, and their Tongues lock'd up with Silver Keys, they durſt not cry out for the reſcue of their Country, thus inhumanly raviſh'd in their very preſence. It will not conſiſt with my deſign'd Brevity, nor is it here neceſſary to give the Reaſons that induc'd the Court to diſſolve that Parliament; nor ſhall I take any further notice of their great and fortunat overſight in doing it, nor of their unfeign'd Repentance afterwards for it: I ſhall only obſerve, That if the Nation had been ſo ſenſleſly ſtupid to have choſen the ſame Members a ſecond time, who were Penſioners in the foregoing Parliament, we had long ago ſuffer'd the diſmal Conſequences of our folly and madneſs in ſuch a Choice; nor ſhould we now have had this liberty to warn one another againſt ſplitting upon the like Rocks, and falling into the ſame Precipices. But they were wiſer in thoſe times, and the conſideration of the dreadful Shipwrack they had ſo lately eſcapt, made them chooſe Pilots of a quite contrary diſpoſition, who, as far as in them lay, and as long as they were permitted to ſit at the Helm, repair'd the ſhatter'd Veſſel of the Commonwealth, reſtor'd its Honour, reviv'd its drooping Genius, gave force to its Laws, countenance to its Religion, and, in a great meaſure, reduc'd our baniſh'd Liberties, and expos'd the Perſons who ſold them to the univerſal hatred and reproach of their fellow Subjects; a Puniſhment indeed infinitely leſs than they deſerv'd for the higheſt Crime a Member of Parliament is capable of committing.

5. As for King *JAMES*'s Reign, tho it was notoriouſly guilty of the breach and violation of moſt of our fundamental Laws, which ſufficiently juſtifies our Carriage towards him, yet cannot we ſay that his Miſmanagement is to be aſcrib'd to the corruption of any Parliament ſitting in his time. 'Tis true indeed he reap'd too much advantage from the Conduct of the brib'd Parliament in his Brother's Reign, and us'd all poſſible endeavours to procure ſuch another for himſelf, well knowing it to be the moſt effectual means for carrying on his ruinous and deſtructive Projects; yet either from the unſhaken Conſtancy of the People, or want of dexterity in his Miniſters, he was altogether defeated in his Expectation.

6. This miſerable diſappointment of King *JAMES*'s hopes made way for our late glorious Revolution, which was brought about by the hearty endeavours, and accompanied with the moſt unfeigned vows and wiſhes of all true Lovers of their Country, who from hence expected a full deliverance from their preſent Miſeries, and a ſure remedy from their future Fears: For what Happineſs might not the People well hope for under the Government of the beſt of Kings, ſupported by the beſt of Titles, *viz.* The general Conſent and Election of his People? We were fill'd with golden dreams not only of a bare ſecurity for our Eſtates and Lives, but an inexhauſted affluence of all manner of Bleſſings a Nation is capable of enjoying. But tho we have dreamt the Dreams, yet have we not ſeen the Viſions. And tho the Nation is by this time ſadly ſenſible how wretchedly they have fallen ſhort of their expected Happineſs, yet are they not all acquainted with the true Spring and Fountain from whence all their Misfortunes flow, which is indeed no other than that bare-fac'd and openly avow'd Corruption, which, like a univerſal Leproſy, has ſo notoriouſly infected and overſpread both our Court and Parliament. 'Tis from hence are plainly deriv'd all the Calamities and Diſtractions under which the whole Nation at preſent groans: 'Tis this that has chang'd the very Natures of *Engliſhmen*, and

of Valiant made them Cowards, of Eloquent Dumb, and of honeſt Men Villains: 'tis this can make a whole Houſe of Commons eat their own words, and countervote what they had juſt before reſolv'd on: 'tis this could ſummon the mercenary Members from all quarters of the Town in an inſtant to vote their fellow Criminals innocent: 'tis this that can make a Parliament throw away the Peoples Mony with the utmoſt profuſion, without enquiring into the management of it: 'tis this that put a ſtop to the examination of that ſcandalous eſcape of the *Thoulon* Fleet into *Brest*: 'tis this that has encourag'd the miſmanagements of the Admiralty in relation to the loſs of ſo vaſt a number of Men of War and Merchant Ships, as well as other Miſcarriages which were by all Men judg'd to proceed not from their want of underſtanding in Sea-Affairs: 'tis this that has hindred the paſſing a Bill ſo often brought into the Houſe for incapacitating Members to bear Offices: 'tis this that could not only indemnify, but honour a leading Member for his audacious procuring and accepting a Grant of Lands, which by the Parliament had been ſet apart for the public Service; a Vote that ſhall ſtand recorded in their own Journals to the never-dying Infamy of that mercenary Aſſembly: 'tis this could make the ſame Perſon moſt confidently affirm, that he was ſure the majority of the Houſe would agree to what he was going to propoſe: 'tis this that could make Men of peaceable Diſpoſitions and conſiderable Eſtates vote for a Standing Army: 'tis this that could bring Admirals to confeſs that our Fleet under their Command was no ſecurity to us: 'tis this could make wiſe Men act againſt their own apparent Intereſt: In ſhort, 'tis this that has infatuated our Prudence, ſtagger'd our Conſtancy, ſullied our Reputation, and introduc'd a total defection from all true *Engliſh* Principles. Bribery is indeed ſo ſure and unavoidable a way to deſtroy any Nation, that we may all ſit down and wonder that ſo much as the very name of a free Government is yet continued to us. And if by our wary choice of Members we ſhould happen to recover our antient Conſtitution, we ſhall with horror and amazement look back, and reflect upon the dreadful Precipice we ſo narrowly eſcapt.

7. Fatal Experience has now more than enough convinc'd us, that Courts have been the ſame in all Ages, and that few Perſons have been found of ſuch approv'd Conſtancy and Reſolution as to withſtand the powerful Allurements and Temptations which from thence have been continually diſpens'd for the corrupting of Mens Minds, and debauching their honeſt Principles. Such Inſtances of the frailty of human Nature may be given within theſe few years paſt, as might make a Man even aſham'd of his own Species, and which (were they not ſo open and notorious) ought out of pity to Mankind to be buried in perpetual ſilence. Who can enough lament the wretched Degeneracy of the Age we live in? To ſee Perſons who were formerly noted for the moſt vigorous Aſſertors of their Country's Liberty, who from their Infancy had imbib'd no other Notions than what conduc'd to the public Safety, whoſe Principles were further improv'd and confirm'd by the advantages of a ſuitable Converſation, and who were ſo far poſſeſt with this ſpirit of Liberty, that it ſometimes tranſported them beyond the bounds of Moderation, even to unwarrantable Exceſſes: to ſee theſe Men, I ſay, ſo infamouſly fall in with the arbitrary meaſures of the Court, and appear the moſt active Inſtruments for enſlaving their Country, and that without any formal ſteps or degrees, but all in an inſtant, is ſo violent and ſurprizing a tranſition from one Extreme to another without paſſing the Mean, as would have confounded the Imaginations of *EUCLID* or *PYRRHO*. All the ſtated Maxims, in relation to the nature of Mankind, which have been long ago ſettled and eſtabliſh'd by Philoſophers and obſerving Men, are now baffled and exploded; and we have nothing left us to contemplate, but the wild extravagancies of Romantic Fables, the ſudden conveyances of nimble finger'd Jugglers, the inimitable diſpatches of tranſubſtantiating Prieſts, or the now more credible Metamorphoſes of Men into Beaſts.

8. The neceſſity we have lain under

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of frequent meetings of Parliament during the War, has taught our Managers so much dexterity and address in their applications to the Members of that Assembly, that they are now become consummate Masters in that most detestable art of corrupting our Representatives, by hopes and fears of attaining or losing Offices and Preferments. And tho I here name Offices, yet those Offices are downright Bribes and Pensions, since they are held precariously from the Court, and constantly taken away upon non-compliance with the Court-measures; tho I am not ignorant that several considerable Pensions were also paid out of the Exchequer to Members of both Houses: For Places could not be had for all, tho they have tried all imaginable arts for dividing amongst themselves the considerable Posts in the Kingdom: For either by splitting of Offices amongst several Persons which were formerly executed by one, or by reviving such as were sunk, or by creating others which were altogether useless and unnecessary, or by promises of Preferment to those who could not presently be provided for, they had made above 200 Members absolutely dependent upon them. And what Points might not such a number carry in the House, who were always ready and constantly attending with more diligence to destroy our Constitution, than the rest were to preserve it? who represented not their Country but themselves, and always kept together in a close and undivided Phalanx, impenetrable either by shame or honour, voting always the same way, and saying always the same things, as if they were no longer voluntary Agents, but so many Engines merely turn'd about by a mechanic Motion, like an Organ where the great humming Bases as well as the little squeaking Trebles are fill'd but with one blast of Wind from the same sound-board? Yet a few of them may in some measure be distinguish'd from those *pointblank* Voters, whom neither their Country's Safety, nor their own more dear and valu'd Interest, nor the persuasion of their once intimate Friends, nor fear of Reproach, nor love of Reputation could ever prevail to join in an honest Point, or dissent from a Question that carried in it the Violation of the Rights and Properties of the Subject. These are the Men who have perswaded his Majesty, or rather assum'd to themselves not to fill up any vacant Offices whilst the Parliament is sitting; but to keep all Pretenders in a dependence till the end of the Session, and bind them up to their ill behaviour, which will then be their best pretence to demand their Wages or Unrighteousness: Witness the Commission of Excise the last Session, which was sued for by, and promis'd to above 50 Competitors, who all did their utmost to signalize their several Merits for an Office, which doubtless will be at last divided amongst those who have deserv'd worst of their Country. By these means they made their Numbers and Interest in the House so great, that no Miscarriage in the Government could ever be redress't, nor the meanest Tool belonging to them be punish'd: some of which they did indeed take into their own hands, which rais'd in the People a high expectation that some extraordinary Penalties would be inflicted upon them; when their design at the same time was nothing else but to protect and screen them from the ordinary course of Justice: such is now the difference in point of Corruption between a common Jury and the Grand Jury of the Nation! such a mutual assistance and support have they been to one another in the several mismanagements of their Trusts: so favourable have they been to their own Creatures, and so implacable to those who have any way oppos'd their unjust Proceedings, witness their scandalous Partiality in the case of *DUNCOMB*, which I hope to see printed at large for the satisfaction of the Public. If it were truly represented, I am sure there needs nothing more to excite in the People a universal detestation of their Arrogance and Injustice. And yet do these Apostates pretend to value themselves upon their Merit in contriving that most destructive Project of Exchequer Bills, by which all impartial men must either think they notoriously dissemble with us, or that they have indeed lost their Senses when they speak of publick service; the word is so unbecoming in their mouths, and so awkerdly pronounc'd, that they seem not to

breath in their own element when they uſurp the name. Theſe are the men who have endeavoured to render our condition hopeleſs even beyond the power of the King himſelf to relieve us: For tho his Majeſty be deſervedly lov'd and honour'd by his People for his readineſs to do them juſtice, and eaſe their oppreſſions, yet can we not expect it from him whilſt he is thus beſet and ſurrounded, and his Palaces invetied by theſe Conſpirators againſt his own honor and the welfare of his Kingdoms. The only remedy therefore that remains is, to chuſe ſuch a Parliament who lie under no temptations, and are acted by no other motives but the real and true Intereſt of his Majeſty and his Dominions; a Parliament that will fall unanimouſly upon publick Buſineſs, and be free from thoſe petty Factions and perſonal Piques which in the late Seſſion ſo ſhamefully obſtructed and delay'd the moſt important Service of the Commonwealth.

9. If it ſhould be pretended, That the Nation is yet unſettled, and the fear of King *JAMES* has forc'd them upon theſe extraordinary Methods for their own preſervation; I anſwer, That no cauſe whatſoever can be juſtly alledg'd in vindication of ſuch vile arts and pernicious practices. But I would farther ask them, what neceſſity there is upon that account for their gaining ſuch prodigious Eſtates to themſelves in ſo ſhort a time, and in ſo mercileſs a way, when the Nation was rack'd to the utmoſt by Taxes in a long and expenſive War? Is it the fear of King *JAMES* that has brought ſuch a reproach upon our Revolution, as if it needed to be ſupported by ſuch mean and unjuſtifiable Practices? Is it the fear of King *JAMES* that makes us content he ſhould live ſo near us, or that he ſhould be maintain'd at our own charge of 50000 *l. per annum*? Or has not rather King *JAMES* been made the pretence for the unwarrantable Proceedings of our Conſpirators during the War, and ſince the concluſion of the Peace? It is very ſtrange that King *JAMES*, who is but their Jeſt in private, ſhould be thus made their publick Bugbear to frighten us out of our ſenſes like Children; ſo that King *JAMES* muſt be at laſt our ruin abroad, who could not compaſs it by all his power and intereſt at home. And in this ſenſe I am of their opinion, That we are not yet quite delivered from the fear of King *JAMES*, who muſt be made the inſtrument of our Slavery by thoſe very Perſons who pretend their greateſt merit to conſiſt in delivering us from him. But what is this but making the old abdicated Tyrant a footſtool to aſcend the Throne of abſolute Power, and a Scaffold for erecting that proud and ſtately Edifice from whence we have ſo juſtly tumbled him down headlong? But 'tis to be hop'd the Nation will be no longer impos'd on by ſuch ſtale pretences as theſe, and that a well-choſen Parliament will not fail to paſs their ſevereſt Cenſures upon thoſe who would thus jeſt us out of all that is dear and valuable amongſt us: That they will no longer reſemble a flock of Sheep (as *CATO* ſaid of the *Romans* in his time) that follow the Bel-weather, and are contented when all together to be led by the noſes by ſuch whoſe Counſels not a man of them would make uſe of in a private cauſe of his own: That they will at laſt vindicate the honor of *England*, and imitate their wiſe Anceſtors in hunting down theſe Beaſts of prey, theſe noxious Vermin to the Commonwealth, rather than ſuffer themſelves to be led in collars and couples by one mighty *NIMROD*, who upon the turning up of his Noſe ſhall expect a full cry of ſequacious Animals, who muſt either join voices or be turn'd out of the pack.

10. Notwithſtanding what I have ſaid, I would not have any of them either really imagine themſelves, or falſly ſuggeſt to others, that I envy them their Places and Preferments, which I am ſo far from doing, that I wiſh they rather had them for the term of their lives; I deſire only they may be ſubject to the Laws, and to ſome Power on Earth that may call them to account for their Misbehaviours, that they may not be their own Judges, that our ſoveraign Remedy may not prove our chief Diſeaſe, and that the Kid may be ſeeth'd in ſomething elſe than its Mother's milk. Nor would I by any means deny them their Seats in Parliament, provid-

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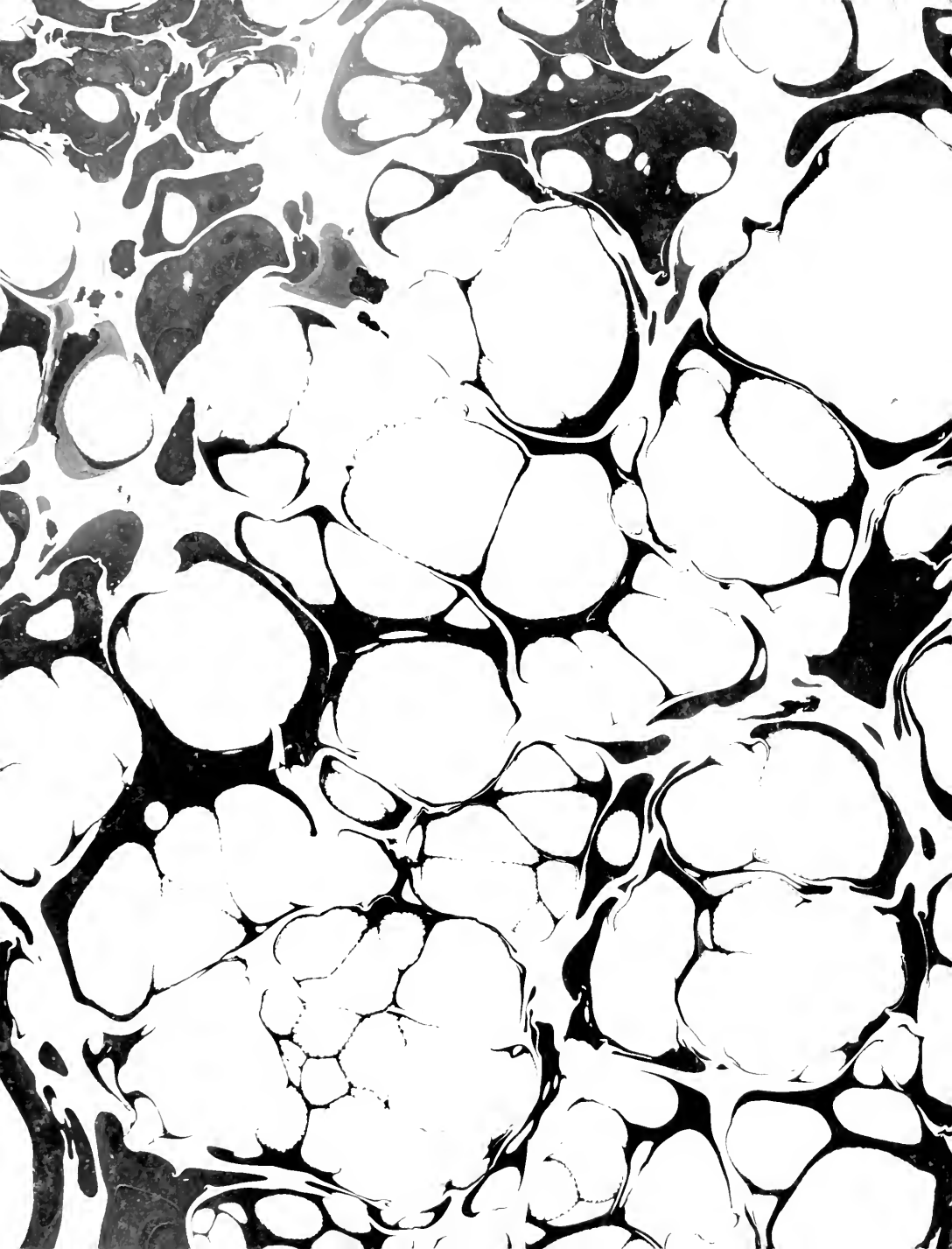
ed they are in a condition to ſpeak and act freely, and diſcharg'd from thoſe temptations which I find they have not conſtancy enough to withſtand; for after all, I ſtill believe many of them ſo honeſt that nothing but Mony or Preferments will corrupt them. But if nothing will ſatisfy them but the downright ſubverſion of our Conſtitution; if they will be content with nothing but the utter aboliſhing of all Laws, and the rooting up of thoſe fences and ſecurities provided by our Anceſtors for the preſervation of all things that are ſacred and eſteem'd amongſt mankind; it is high time for the Electors to look about them, and diſappoint their unreaſonable and exorbitant hopes, and to ſpew them out as deteſtable Members of the Commonwealth; not only as unfit to be truſted with their Liberties, but as unworthy to breath in the air of a Free Government.

11. If any ſhould ſay, That the alterations in Elections will ſtand us in no ſtead, ſince whoever are choſen will ſtill be bought off and brib'd by Court-preferments: I anſwer, it will require a conſiderable time to new-model and debauch a Houſe of Commons, nor can it be done but by diſplacing all thoſe who are already poſſeſs'd, to make room for theſe new comers, which will make the trade and myſtery of Bribery more plain, and conſequently more abhor'd. And ſince no Parliament can now ſit above three years, the Court will meet with freſh Difficulties to interrupt them, which may poſſibly at laſt make them weary of theſe Practices. 'Tis true indeed, this Conſideration ought to make us more circumſpect in our choice of Members, for tho we ſhould chooſe but an inconſiderable number of Penſioners, yet will they ſoon be able to work over a majority to their ſide: ſo true is the ſaying, *A little leaven leavens the whole Lump*. Whoever therefore out of any particular friendſhip, or other motives of fear or private Intereſt, ſhould vote for any one Perſon ſo qualify'd; let him conſider, that as much as in him lies, he makes a complement of all the Liberties of *England* to the unſatiable avarice and ambition of Stateſmen and Court-Miniſters. Since therefore we have ſo narrowly eſcap'd our deſtruction, and one Seſſion more of the laſt Parliament would infallibly have ruin'd our Conſtitution, we cannot ſurely be ſo grolly overſeen as to neglect the opportunity now put into our hands for avoiding the like hazards in time to come; which may eaſily be done, if the Freeholders and Burghers in *England* will petition and engage their Repreſentatives to conſent to a Bill which ſhall be brought into the Houſe, to incapacitate all Members for holding Offices and Preferments: or if it ſhould be thought too much to debar them altogether from the enjoyments of Poſts of honor and advantage, let them keep them during good behaviour, and not otherwiſe; that ſuch Places may not be reſerv'd in ſtore for thoſe who ſhall be from time to time elected, and thereby a continued courſe of corruption be carry'd on ſucceſſively thro the whole Nation, who will in a few years inſenſibly find themſelves ſo univerſally infected with this inſinuating Vice, that we ſhall be throughly ripe for deſtruction, and readily expoſe to ſale the Liberties of *England* by Auction to the fareſt bidder. If it was deſervedly thought one of our moſt dangerous Grievances, that the Judges, who only declare the Law, ſhould hold their places *ad beneplacitum*; what condition muſt we be in when our Law-makers themſelves are ſubjected to the ſame temptations? Or what advantage have we got by having our Judges Commiſſions for life, when our very Legiſlature it ſelf is proſtituted to bribery and ſordid gain? The fortune of *England* is now brought to the niceſt point, and there are critical ſeaſons, which if neglected, will never again be offer'd; and ſhould we now fail in our duty to our Country, we ſhall aſſuredly fall unpitied by the reſt of the world. But if on the other hand we can by our foreſight and diligence prevent for the future the bribing and corruption of Parliaments, it is not to be imagin'd what ſecurity, what happineſs, and what immortal reputation will be the never-ceaſing concomitants of ſuch a Settlement. If the very Rump of a Parliament, even in the midſt of domeſtic Diſcontents, and beſet on all ſides with foreign Aſſaults and Invaſions,

which he has already so firmly erected in the hearts and affections of his Subjects: And lastly, that he might wholly discharge himself of those wretched and pernicious Statesmen, who endeavour to fix the brand of their own acquir'd infamy upon their Master, that they may make him as hateful to one party for their Vices, as he is already to another for his own Virtues, and deprive him of the glorious Title of the World's greatest Benefactor, which he has so justly purchas'd to himself by his immortal Performances.

12. I shall conclude with one word, in answer to such who may possibly think I have reflected too much upon the supineness and base neglect of the People of *England*; as if it were possible they could be such monstrous and unnatural Self-murderers, as to give away with their own breath and free consent all their Rights to their Estates and Lives. I confess I should be glad to find my labour lost upon this account: But I desire such to consider, that there are many honest and well-meaning *Englishmen* who do not distinguish between our present Government, and our present [illegible] Parliament, whose distance from the Parliament, multiplicity of Business, and other Circumstances in the world, render them less able to penetrate the designs that are now carrying on for the total subversion of our most excellent Constitution. And it is plain on the other hand, that the great and unwearied diligence of the present Conspirators against our Government, in order to support their future Elections, does infer their thoughts that the majority of the Electors are capable of being impos'd upon in this gross and unexampled manner. Since therefore those who are making us Slaves, think it no great difficulty to effect their purposes, I see no reason why I ought to be so tender as to forbear expressing my fears and apprehensions of their success.

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